

Message Text

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11
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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P R 251508Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1596
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 7084

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PINT, LE, SY, MILI
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH KAMAL JUNBLATT

REF: BEIRUT 3822

1. SUMMARY: DURING DISCUSSION WITH CHARGE AUG 24, KAMAL JUNBLATT CRITICIZED U.S. POLICY IN LEBANON , SAID SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL IS SINE QUA NON FOR LEBANESE ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION, AND STRONGLY SUPPORTED STATIONING OF A POWERFUL ARAB LEAGUE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN LEBANON. END SUMMARY.

2. CHARGE HUNT, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFF LANE, CALLED ON LEBANESE LEFTIST LEADER KAMAL JUNBLATT AUG 24. HUNT SAID HE WAS MAKING SERIES OF VISITS TO PROMINENT LEBANESE LEADERS IN WEST BEIRUT, AS FOLLOW-UP TO AMB SEELYE'S MISSION, AND WELCOMED OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS SITUATION WITH JUNBLATT. AS JUNBLATT AWARE, FSO'S HOUGHTON AND MACK WERE CURRENTLY
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VISITING CHRISTIAN LEADERS, LOCATED IN AREA EMBASSY

OFFICIALS COULD NOT VISIT FOR SECURITY REASONS, AS PART OF
USG EFFORT TO LEARN VIEWS OF ALL PARTIES.

3. JUNBLATT REPLIED WITH STRONG ATTACK AGAINST USG POLICY.
HE SAID USG HAD "OBVIOUSLY" BEEN BEHIND SYRIAN ATTACK
AGAINST LEFTISTS AND PALESTINIANS, AND HAD COOPERATED WITH
ISRAEL IN PROVIDING ARMS TO CHRISTIAN SIDE AND ORGANIZING
BLOCKAGE OF TYRE AND SIDON. EMBOFFS DENIED USG WAS
MASTERMINDING A "PLOT" AGAINST LEBANON AND ASKED JUNBLATT'S
VIEWS ON CURRENT SITUATION.

4. JUNBLATT SAID KEY TO CEASE-FIRE AND PEACE IN LEBANON
WAS SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL; THERE COULD BE NO SETTLEMENT UNTIL
THIS HAPPENED. SYRIA OBVIOUSLY INTENDED TO ANNEX THE
BEKAA AND THE AKKAR, AS THEIR RECENT ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS
IN THOSE AREAS INDICATED. IF USG REALLY SUPPORTED LEBANESE
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND UNITY, WE SHOULD PUT PRESSURE ON
SYRIA TO GIVE UP ITS ILLEGAL OCCUPATION OF MORE THAN HALF
OF LEBANON. UNLESS SYRIA WITHDREW, IT WOULD BE A LONG WAR,
AND THERE WAS DANGER OF AN ANGOLA-TYPE SITUATION DEVELOPING.

5. IN DISCUSSING CURRENT EFFORTS TO ARRANGE A CEASE-FIRE,
JUNBLATT SAID KEY WAS THE POSITIONING OF STRONG ARAB
LEAGUE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE CONSISTING OF 12,000-15,000
MEN AND 150-200 TANKS IN LEBANON. PORTIONS OF THIS FORCE
SHOULD BE STATIONED IN CRITICAL CONFRONTATION AREAS, LOCAL
MILITIAS DISARMED AND SENT HOME, AND A ROUND-TABLE
CONFERENCE CONVENED. HE SAID THAT HE HAD PROPOSED SUCH A
CONFERENCE IN MARCH, BEFORE DIRECT SYRIAN INTERVENTION,
AND BASHIR GEMAYEL HAD AGREED. HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT ONCE
LEBANESE PARTIES WERE TALKING TO EACH OTHER, A SOLUTION
COULD BE FOUND (ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SUGGEST WHAT IT WOULD
BE). AL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE WOULD NOT BE NEEDED FOR MORE
THAN SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR; DURING THIS PERIOD, PRESIDENT
SARKIS WOULD TAKE OVER AND WOULD HAVE TIME TO REORGANIZE
THE ARMY AND THE POLICE. THE LEBANESE ON ALL SIDES WERE
TIRED OF WAR. LET US CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE IN PEACE, NOT
WITH FIGHTING, HE SAID. LEBANESE HISTORY SHOWS THAT
LEBANESE WILL BE ABLE TO WORK OUT A MODUS VIVENDI.

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6. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, JUNBLATT SAID IT WAS A
MISTAKE TO THINK THAT LEBANESE PROBLEM COULD NOT BE SOLVED
UNTIL THERE WAS A SOLUTION TO PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. THIS
WAS AN ERROR DEAN BROWN HAD MADE. ONCE THERE WAS A CEASE-
FIRE IN LEBANON, PALESTINIANS WOULD RETURN TO THEIR CAMPS--
UNDER CAIRO ACCORDS OR SOMETHING SIMILAR. JUNBLATT NOTED
THAT PALESTINIANS MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISCIPLINE
WITHIN CAMPS AND HE WAS CERTAIN THEY WANTED DO SO. HE

SUPPORTED RECENTLY ANNOUNCED CONSCRIPTION OF ALL PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON, SINCE THIS WOULD INCREASE CONTROL OF PALESTINIAN LEADERS OVER POTENTIALLY UNRULY ELEMENTS.

7. BACKING OFF SOMEWHAT FROM HIS EARLIER ACCUSATION THAT USG WAS INVOLVED IN CURRENT LEBANESE TRAGEDY, JUNBLATT THEN SAID USG POLICY HAD BEEN TOOPASSIVE; USG HAD SIMPLY SAT BACK AND LET SITUATION FALL APART. HE URGED THAT USG PUBLICLY SUPPORT STATIONING OF STRONG AL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN LEBANON, PUT PRESSURE ON SAUDIS, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS KEY COUNTRY, TO DO LIKEWISE, AND IF NECESSARY PROVIDE FINANCING. USG SHOULD ALSO REITERATE AT HIGHEST LEVEL ITS SUPPORT FOR LEBANESE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND UNITY, "THREE TIMES A WEEK, IF NECESSARY" SO THAT EVERYONE WOULD KNOW WHERE WE STAND.

8. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE SEVERAL SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THIS CONVERSATION AND AMB SEELYE'S MEETING WITH JUNBLATT ON JULY 1 (REFTEL), TONE OF DISCUSSION REFLECTS CONTINUING DETERIORATION OF LEFTIST/PALESTINIAN POSITION DURING PAST TWO MONTHS. THIS TIME JUNBLATT TALKED MORE ABOUT NEED FOR A CEASE-FIRE BEFORE PRESIDENT SARKIS TAKES OFFICE, FOLLOWED BY ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION, AND LESS ABOUT HIS IDEAS FOR LEBANON OF THE FUTURE. HE CONTINUES TO INSIST ON COMPLETE SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON BEFORE HE WILL PARTICIPATE IN ANY DISCUSSION BETWEEN LEBANESE PARTIES, BUT HE MAY REALIZE THAT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES HIS CHANCES OF ATTAINING THIS OBJECTIVE ARE SLIGHT.
HUNT

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